

Mansfield Commission on Aging Minutes
9:30 AM – Senior Center
Monday, June 8, 2009

PRESENT: T. Quinn (Chair), W. Bigl, K. Grunwald (staff), M. Thatcher, C. Phillips, M. Ross, T. Rogers, S. Gordon, P. Richardson (staff), K. Doeg, C. Phillips, J. Quarto, C. Pellegrine, Melinda Perkins (guest), Rose Kurcinik (guest), J. Scottron

REGRETS: none.

- I. **Call to Order:** Chair T. Quinn called the meeting to order at 9:30 PM.
- II. **Appointment of Recording Secretary:** K. Grunwald agreed to take minutes for the meeting.
- III. **Acceptance of Minutes:** The minutes of the May 11 meeting were accepted, with the correction that Mary Thatcher should be listed under regrets.
- IV. **Correspondence** – Chair and Staff: none
- V. **New Business**
 - A. Windham Region Transit District: T. Quinn introduced Melinda Perkins and Rose Kurcinik from the Windham Region Transit District. There are several services that they offer including the Storrs-Willi fixed route bus service, Willi Bus and Dial-A-Ride. The fixed route stops at designated stops at specific times of the day. Some of the trips only go as far as the Eastbrook Mall, while others go into Willimantic. The question was posed as to what the specific questions are about the fixed route? J. Quarto said that the group is interested in learning about the system in general; T. Quinn added that it's an issue of making the public aware of the bus route. There are timetables posted by the Public Works Dept. at each stop. Schedules should be available in all public buildings, Mansfield General Store, Grand Union, Jensen's, etc. C. Phillips asked if there could be a park and ride area designated at one of the stops? It seems that there are no park and ride lots in town. There has recently been a stop added at the Community Center; but there is a problem with poison ivy at the site, and also the cut-through to the Community Center has not been approved. Eventually a shelter will be added there. All of the shelters and stops are the responsibility of the town that they're located in. P. Richardson asked about developing a shelter at the Senior Center stop. Rose Kurcinik provided an overview of Dial-A-Ride services. Rides normally need to be scheduled 48 hours in advance, although they will try to accommodate medical appointments. There is no fee for seniors. C. Phillips asked if the van waits at an appointment; Rose explained that the services are scheduled separately. The municipal transportation grant provides transportation to medical appointments outside of the Dial-A-Ride region, and this is brokered

by the Transit District. K. Doeg said that Dial-A-Ride is a helpful service for volunteers at the hospital. They operate 20 vans and 8 buses. M. Perkins added that ridership has grown in the past 5 years by more than double on the Storrs-Willi bus. The governor's budget has requested a 40% fare increase for the buses, and eliminates funding for the municipal grant. The Department of Transportation has requested that unspent money be allowed to be rolled over into the next funding cycle, along with money unspent by towns that don't participate. Staff were encouraged to apply for available DOT funds. T. Rogers asked about the towns that are not served by Dial-A-Ride. Melinda explained that transportation between this region and Manchester has been identified as a priority for a number of years, but has not been funded. Rose added that this is how the municipal transportation grant has been used.

- B. "Other": C. Phillips provided an update on members whose first terms are expiring; they were encouraged to notify Carol to volunteer for a second term.

VI. Optional Reports on Services/Needs of Town Aging Populations

A. Health Care Services

Wellness Center and Wellness Program – J. Kenny distributed copies of her monthly report.

Mansfield Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – J. Kenny; no report.

B. Social, Recreational and Educational

Senior Center – P. Richardson distributed a copy of her monthly report, along with a sample report from MySeniorCenter. She pointed out that the report indicated that the largest percentages of people using the Senior Center are in the 66-70 age range. Much of this information will be helpful in planning classes and programs. This report will be more complete once the system is being used consistently by all people who come to the Senior Center. P. Richardson explained that funding for the printing of the Sparks newsletter was eliminated from the coming year's budget. A recommendation was made for an external group to print it, but because a decision has not been made a July issue of Sparks will not be printed; it will be made available on-line.

Senior Center Assoc. – Tom Rogers reported that the newsletter committee will be making a final recommendation to Association membership next week. He also added that Carol Phillips, Zoe Leibowitz and Gwen Duff have withdrawn from their leadership positions in the Association.

C. Housing

Assisted Living Advisory Committee, Wrights Way, Juniper Hill, Jensen's Park, Other: T. Quinn explained that there is no representative from Juniper Hill. W. Bigl reported that several activities are planned for the summer at Jensen's.

D. Related Town and Regional Organizations such as:

Advisory Committee on the Needs of Persons with Disabilities: K. Grunwald reported that this group now has a web page on the Town's website. He also added that they are looking at the issue of raising parking fines for violation of handicapped parking spaces, and looking at access issues at the post offices in Storrs and Mansfield Center.

VII. Old Business

- A. Long Range Plan for 2007- 2010: Update on Action Plans (all): no discussion.
- B. Role of the Commission on Aging: T. Quinn has provided information on this to all members, stressing that the role is advisory.
- C. Mansfield 2020: Review of Action Plans: all have been forwarded to the steering committee.
 - New Senior Center: T. Quinn distributed a draft memo to the Town Council regarding acquisition of the Warren property. K. Grunwald explained that the Masonicare, and not the Town, would be acquiring this property. There was some extensive discussion about what the intent of this action is. C. Pellegrine suggested that as a continuation of Mansfield 2020 the Council form an ad hoc committee to explore the expansion of the Senior Center facility. Members voted down the motion contained in Tim's memo unanimously. T. Quinn feels that this is not practical to be talking about a new Senior Center at this time. C. Pellegrine feels that given everything that's on the Council's docket right now it would be helpful to get this on their agenda to continue to explore this. T. Quinn stated that the Commission is already on record as supporting the building of a new Senior Center; his feeling is that the Council will not form a new committee at this time. There were several questions about what the process would be for building a new Senior Center? T. Quinn said that the model to follow would be a school building committee, which is appointed by the Board of Education. K. Grunwald suggested that this be brought up at Town Council meetings. C. Pellegrine moved that the Commission on Aging go on record with the Town Council that they are supporting an expanded Senior Center facility, and that the Council be aware of appropriate properties as they become available. Motion passed unanimously. T. Quinn will deliver this motion to the Council.
 - Board of Senior Citizens: no discussion.
 - Transportation: C. Pellegrine provided information to the Town Council on why this is a priority, and they have requested information on the use of volunteer drivers. K. Grunwald has provided this information to the Council. He also added that there is money in the budget for assistive hearing technology.
 - Tax Relief: no discussion.
 - Employment Opportunities: no discussion.

VIII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 AM. Next meeting: **Monday, September 14, 2009** at 9:30 AM at the Senior Center

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Grunwald